

DOES EUROPE NEED CHIEF WHO "SWIPED A CONTINENT"?

It Would Surprise No
One in England If
Kitchener Were to Make
His One-Time Arch
Enemy Generalissimo.

WILL General Louis Botha, the man who "swiped a continent," prove the savior of England on the continental

battlefields? Will the famous Boer general who was first the hater of England and is now England's dearest friend, who first endeavored to throw England out of the southern end of the African continent and later—but a few weeks ago—won for England from Germany a vast tract of South Africa consisting of more than 300,000 square miles, will this famous Boer general take charge of the English forces in France and bring to England the victory that the English generals so far have apparently been unable to bring to her?

General Botha is perhaps the ablest general that the Boer countries have produced. He has been familiar with war since as a boy of twenty-two years he fought the Zulus. During the English-Boer war his achievements as a leader of the Boers were nothing less than brilliant. But his greatest military laurels came to him only recently when, with a poorly equipped force, he nipped in the bud the revolt of the Boers which took place shortly after war was declared last summer, and later moved into German Southwest Africa, captured its defenders and won the territory for the British crown.

As a result he received a warm letter of thanks from Lord Kitchener and congratulations from other highly placed British officials. Then, what is more astonishing, he received a lengthy personal letter from Kitchener himself, asking him to come to England to help the English fight the Germans.

The letter was worded in such a manner as to warm the old soldier's heart. It left Botha no excuse for saying "no." Just what are the definite offers made to Botha no one knows. All that the English press has permitted to be published is that Botha has been invited to help England against Germany, and that Botha has accepted the invitation.

Conjectures are rife as to what will be the rank of the famous general. It will surprise no one if Kitchener and the other English leaders make him the generalissimo of the English armies. In fact, it will surprise nearly everybody who is familiar with the situation if he is not given supreme command.

It will, of course, be a direct slap in the face for Sir John French, the present commander-in-chief of the field forces of England. Yet it is pointed out in England that Sir John French is at loggerheads with Kitchener and that he has not accomplished much to date, anyway. Botha, according to the best informed, is the one man whom England needs today more than any other, for while England has been able to produce generals who are successful organizers, she has not been able to find a man who has had great practical field experience in handling large bodies of men. And this is one of Botha's pre-eminent qualities.

Botha was born on a small farm near the lonely town of Natal. His father was a middle class farmer who, shortly after Louis's birth, thought he would try his luck where land was cheap. Accordingly, he hitched up his oxen and set out on a trek, taking his family with him.

He traveled until he had reached the undulating plains of the Orange Free State, and there pitched his camp. Young Louis grew up as most Boers do. He had to watch his father's flock, milk the cows and train horses and oxen for riding and for draft purposes.

When he was ten years old he could ride any horse brought to him, and from time to time won many horse races that were organized by the farmers in the vicinity.

Until he was twenty-two years old Louis remained on his father's farm, plowing, rearing and shearing, and doing the hundred and one odd things that

are required by the pioneer's life. It was in these years that he got that intimate knowledge of the land which made him one of the best ministers of agriculture who ever held that position in the Boer nation.

He knew all the different diseases which attacked stock and cattle at different periods of the year, and in many cases was able to suggest a remedy. By being able to enter into the innermost lives of the farmers and dealing with them in a sympathetic manner he succeeded in winning their confidence and has retained it until this day.

The veld was Botha's university. He grew up an experienced farmer, an experienced rider and a crack rifle shot. His education was his knowledge of the soil. His schoolroom was among the wild flowers of the high veld. There was no other education to be had in those days in Botha's country.

Like Lincoln, Botha improved his working time by taking always a book to study while he was looking after the sheep on his father's farm. Round the hearth at night time his father maintained the ancient practice of saying the evening prayers and reading a chapter of the Bible, so that young Louis was reared in a strongly religious, almost Puritanic, atmosphere.

The father also would tell his children of the deeds accomplished and the dangers passed by the old Voortrekkers who were the pioneers of the hinterland of

South Africa. These tales of the olden days fired the imagination of young Botha, in whom the spirit of adventure was already strong.

As a lad he knew nothing of what fear was. He would go on hunting trips that would last days and weeks at a time, and his game was his one desire. As the years went by the farm grew too small for his ambitions. When he was twenty-two years old his chance came.

At this time Catewayo, the old Zulu king, had been deposed by the English, and his son, Dinizulu, had been made head of the Zulu nation. There was another claimant for the honor, however, in Catewayo's brother, who attempted to wrest the kingship from his nephew.

He brought up his warriors and stormed the young king's village, with the result that the king had to flee to safety. In the mountains the king gathered what forces he could in preparation for another fight against his uncle. One of his counselors, an old man who had

fought with his grandfather, endeavored to dissuade his ruler from entering into combat with the older and more clever relative, and suggested it would be better to enlist the help of the Boers who had settled in the neighborhood.

Dinizulu was quick to see the advantages of this plan and sent out messengers to the Boers. It was not long before Botha heard of the expedition. Here at last was the chance which he had been so long desiring. He hurriedly said good-bye to his father, and, accompanied by his brother Gert, went off to the "war" with his gun slung over his shoulder.

By five days of hard riding they came to the junction of the Buffalo and Blood rivers, where the old Voortrekkers annihilated Dingaan's savage horde. Here

they found more Boers from the Transvaal and the Free State, as well as a few from Natal.

A meeting was held in the open and Lukas Meyer was appointed commanding officer of the 200 Boers who had gathered. Dinizulu's impi, his regiment of warriors, went out to engage the usurper's army, while the Boers remained ambushed. At a given signal they rushed out on horseback, firing as they went, and drove off the astonished usurper and all his forces. The fight was short and sharp. Never again did Usibepu dispute his nephew's right to kingship over the land.

Botha made himself conspicuous for his daring and bravery during the engagement. When it was over Commandant Meyer congratulated him on what he had done. For their services the Boers received a large tract of land which later became known as the Vrijheid. They immediately set up a new republic with Lukas Meyer as president and Louis Botha as the native commissioner.

For four years the new republic existed in peace and with a fair degree of prosperity. In 1888, however, the new territory was taken over by the South African republic as the result of an abortive effort to establish a port on the coast of Zululand. The British government would not allow a port to be opened and made a demonstration with gunboats in order to intimidate the members of the young republic.

After its incorporation with the South African republic it had representatives in the Volksraad, the first of whom was Meyer. Botha was promoted to commis-

sioner to Swaziland, a position which he held for some five or six years. Later he was elected to the Volksraad.

While he was serving in the legislature an application came from a concern asking for the privilege of making dynamite. When the application was first voted on it was defeated, Botha being one of those who cast his vote against it. A second application was made, however, and granted. This time Botha voted for it, and it was charged that Botha had changed his vote because he had been bribed. The charge was never proved and the consensus of opinion at the time was that it was jealousy that had prompted the charge.

Botha was still a member of the Raad when England set out on her campaign to subjugate the Boers in 1899. He joined his old Vrijheid commando among his comrades and under his old general, Lukas Meyer. He was engaged in the first fight at Talana and distinguished himself by bravery in rescuing several wounded Boers and carrying them behind the lines.

For this deed and by his clever handling of a squad of men whose officers had all been killed or wounded he was promoted to the rank of assistant fighting general, which was equivalent to the rank of colonel.

He was in the long trek from Dundee to Ladysmith and took part in the famous siege of Ladysmith. When General Joubert was mortally wounded outside Ladysmith he expressed the wish that Louis Botha, who had distinguished himself on several occasions by his daring and good generalship, should succeed him as general of the Transvaal forces.

It was at a meeting held in a woodshed on the Natal border on the eve of the war that both Joubert and Botha strongly advised the Boers not to cross the border. There were too many Boer jingoes present, however, and the good advice was not heeded.

For this reason there were some people who opposed Botha's elevation to the rank of commandant general. The majority of the leaders, however, felt that there was no other man for the position and he was overwhelmingly elected to the place.

It was Botha who led the Boers as they cut their way through the forces of Buller, who had surrounded them. He personally was in charge of the force which withstood the Dublin fusiliers as they tried to cross the river and outflank the Boer army. It was a terrible day for both Boers and English. Botha was continually on the move. Riding a white horse, he made a conspicuous object as he directed the men in their moves and in their building of earthworks, and almost by a miracle he came through the battle unscathed.

After the brave fight that the handful of Boers made against the unlimited thousands of English troops it was Botha who negotiated the peace terms. He proved as capable a statesman as a warrior. He, the ex-shepherd, succeeded in getting from the iron-hearted Kitchener and the old diplomat Milner extraordinarily easy terms.

Botha signed the treaty and he has religiously lived up to the terms. When England went to war with Germany Botha was premier of the Boer republic which England had conquered. And as premier he felt it his duty to take the field against his brother Boers who had seized the opportunity to rebel against England and to punish a few. He has been severely criticized for this, but whether he did right or wrong is a question for history to decide.

Later he moved against the Germans in their colony in Southwest Africa and conquered their territory. It was then that his old foe, Lord Kitchener, sent him a message of congratulations. To everybody's surprise he invited the victorious Boer general to come to England to help the British fight the Germans in Europe. Botha's reply was no less astonishing in that he accepted the invitation with the most pronounced display of warmth he has ever shown.

The territory that Botha captured from the Germans in Africa has been named Bothaland in his honor. It is being whispered about in England that he has been offered rank and title. The English think that it is due the man who, more than any other, has attempted to bring about an understanding between the English and the conquered but still proud Boers.

Will Botha accept rank and title from the English? He is a plain man of the people and has been brought up among people who despise all ranks and titles. All his training has been antimonarchical, but his detractors say that if title is offered to him he will accept it, as he has accepted every other lucrative position the English have yet offered him.



GENERAL
LOUIS
BOTHAS

Fall of Adam Due to Drink Plied by Eve; Vindicating the Apple

ADAM was the original victim of fermented grape juice and it was Eve who induced him to take it! This much about our ancient and honored ancestor has been definitely settled.

At least it has been settled definitely to the satisfaction of Sir William Willcocks, K. C. M. G., the noted English engineer who is the designer and builder of the Assuan dam and projector of the irrigation system of Mesopotamia and has an intimate acquaintance with all the places made famous by biblical history.

Sir William maintains that Adam and Eve left the Garden of Eden not because they ate apples, but because Eve hit on a plan of making wine out of the grapes which grew and still grow so luxuriantly in that region. In other words, she led Adam to be a drinking man. He declares that if the commonly accepted idea

of the Garden of Eden were true neither Adam nor Eve would have left it.

The flood, which made Noah's reputation as the first skipper, has been duplicated often in the Mississippi valley, Sir William says. Furthermore, the ark never rested on top of Mount Ararat. The flood story and many other biblical tales which Sir William thinks are far from the truth have resulted from mistakes by the translators in trying to decipher languages that had long been dead when the first books of the Bible were written. Sir William believes that the translators were entirely honest in their intentions, but because of their mistakes the world has been grossly deceived.

In planning the irrigation system of Mesopotamia Sir William discovered the exact location of the Garden of Eden—at the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates. At the time the two original settlers went

there, Sir William says, nothing grew in the garden except date palms, vines and alfalfa.

They subsisted on dates and everything went along happily, until Eve found how to make wine out of the grapes, and then she wasn't satisfied until she had Adam drinking it. He grew dissatisfied with dates as soon as he became addicted to drink, and it is Sir William's idea that Adam and Eve left the garden to try to find something to eat besides dates.

Taking up the flood episode, Sir William says that if the inundation had been so extensive as to leave the ark stranded on top of Mount Ararat the forty days rain would have had to yield a precipitation of 5,000 inches a day, which is quite a shower. As a matter of fact the ancient word Ararat really meant "desert" in the language of the flood times, and what happened was that the rivers overflowed

and inundated the valley in which Adam lived. All the settlers for many miles around hurried over to Noah's to take refuge in his ark and when the floods receded the ark remained in the valley.

Sir William claims that the ancient flood sufferers really thought the inundation had covered the entire world, and they commenced building high towers to escape future inundations. The Tower of Babel was one of the first of these, and while it was under way the people from the surrounding countries all rushed there for safety in case of another flood. Naturally there were many languages spoken and a "confusion of tongues" was the result. This led the tower builders to believe that God had sent a confusion of tongues because he was angry over the penetration of the towers into heaven.

"This is one of the childish stories that have come down to us, because it has pleased God in his wisdom to preserve it for us," asserts Sir William.

One of the inundations of the Nile,

Sir William says, turned a great depression in the desert into a lake. The ancient Egyptians built an enormous dike from the lake to the Nile, which made the entire country fertile, but the dike became the cause of constant strife between the kings of upper and lower Egypt.

Joseph, who had been imprisoned by one of the pharaohs of lower Egypt, was more intelligent than his captors, and realized that eventually a fleet from the upper Nile would come down and cut the dike. The water would all flow into the great depressions and a long famine would result.

Joseph figured that the upper kings couldn't get their fleets ready for the successful attack for seven years, and upon his urgent advice his captors began storing up grain against the evil day when the famine would come. His words were prophetic, and when the dike was captured and cut and the famine came the people of lower Egypt were ready for it. Joseph was then raised to an exalted position, and he later rebuilt the dike and held it for forty years.

Sir William believes that one of the great mistakes of the ancient historians was to have Moses leading the children of Israel across the Red sea. If Moses had gone to the Red sea in the time he is credited with taking, he would have had to lead his flock, in which were many children, across forty-four miles of desert in twenty-four hours.

"Those people who still insist that the Israelites crossed the Red sea admit that if they did so the Red sea must have come up about thirty-one miles farther than it does today," he maintains. "Why should it be made to come up thirty-one miles just to please these people who have made a mistake in translation?"

Moses actually crossed the River Nile, Sir William claims, and the way he led his followers across on dry land was to build a dike. When the Israelites had crossed Moses cut the dike and the Egyptian army following them was drowned.

"While restoring an old branch of the Nile I did very much what Moses did in the matter of constructing a dike," he says.